

Field notes — Kurze Exkursionsberichte — Excursions en bref

The Moroccan Anti-Atlas : a four day survey of the Rhopalocera in April 1987 (Lepidoptera)

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The Anti-Atlas is a mountain range with peaks reaching 3000 m and a semi-arid climate situated to the south of Agadir and the High Atlas in Morocco. It appears from the entomological literature that it has been less well studied than the Middle or High Atlas.

We first experienced the lepidopterological interest of the area on 23rd April 1981, when on a day trip from Agadir the first author noted some worn *Thersamonia phoebus* BLACHIER at Tizi-n-Tarakatine. From the 15th-18th April 1987, we were able to spend four days visiting several different habitats in the region with our wives Maria and Anna. Based at the comfortable Hotel Les Amandiers in Tafraoute, we visited the following localities :

1. Tizi-n-Tarakatine, 1500-1700 m.
Stony, flowery slopes along the road to Ait-Baha, exposed to the wind.
2. Ait-Abdallah, 1400-1500 m.
Arid valleys and dry river beds south of the village.
3. Ait-Abdallah, 1400 m.
Rocks and stony slopes above the village.
4. Tizourhane, 1200 m.
Hill-top to the right of the road to Tiznit.
5. Kerdous Pass, 1000 m.
About 1 km past the Kerdous Hotel, on the road to Tiznit. Green north-facing slopes.

The daytime temperature was always between 25 and 35°C. Butterflies were on the wing from about 9 a.m., with a peak flight between 9.30 and 11.30 a.m. Few butterflies were still flying after 1 p.m. A total of 30 species were recorded, of which *Cigaritis allardi* OBERTHÜR, *Thersamonia phoebus* BLACHIER and *Plebejus martini* ALLARD seem to be the most interesting (Table 1).

Cigaritis allardi OBERTHÜR : The forewing upperside of the male is very variable, some specimens with brown spots large and with strong suffusion along the costa, others with spots smaller, missing in spaces 1 and 2, and sometimes even from space 3, with costal suffusion weak. This would suggest that *estherae* BREVIGNON, 1984 (*Alexanor* 13 (7) : 307-308) is an individual form rather than a subspecies of *allardi*.

Plebejus martini ALLARD : Specimens much darker and more strongly marked than those from the Taghzeft Pass in the Middle Atlas. They are more similar to ssp. *allardi* OBERTHÜR known only from Algeria. According to MOKHLES (*Not. lepid.*

Table 1. List of species seen. F = Few, C = Common.

	Locality No.				
	1	2	4	4	5
Papilionidae					
<i>Papilio machaon mauritanicus</i> BLACHIER	F	F			
<i>Ipheclides feisthamelii</i> DUPONCHEL		F			
Pieridae					
<i>Anthocharis belia</i> LINNAEUS	C	C	C	C	C
<i>Elphinstonia charltonia</i> DONZEL	F	F		C	
<i>Euchloe ausonia melanochloros</i> RÖBER	F		F		
<i>Euchloe belemia</i> ESPEr				1	
<i>Colotis evagore nouna</i> LUCAS	F				
<i>Pontia daplidice</i> LINNAEUS	C	C	C	C	C
<i>Colias crocea</i> FOURCROY	C	C	C	C	C
<i>Gonepteryx cleopatra</i> LINNAEUS	C				C
Lycaenidae					
<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i> LINNAEUS	C	C	C	C	C
<i>Cigaritis allardi</i> OBERTHÜR					C
<i>Thersamonia phoebus</i> BLACHIER	C				1
<i>Lampides boeticus</i> LINNAEUS				C	
<i>Cupido lorquini</i> HERRICH-SCHÄFFER	C				
<i>Aricia cramera</i> ESCHSCHOLTZ	C	C			
<i>Polyommatus icarus celina</i> AUSTAUT	C	C		C	
<i>Plebejus martini</i> ALLARD		F			
<i>Pseudophilotes abencerragus</i> PIERRET	C	C	C	C	C
<i>Lysandra punctifera</i> OBERTHÜR	F				
Nymphalidae					
<i>Cynthia cardui</i> LINNAEUS	C	C	C	C	C
<i>Melitaea phoebe punica</i> OBERTHÜR	C	C	C	C	C
<i>Melitaea deserticola</i> OBERTHÜR		C			
Satyridae					
<i>Lasiommata megera</i> LINNAEUS	C			C	
<i>Melanargia ines</i> HOFFMANNSEGG	C	C	C	C	C
Hesperiidae					
<i>Carcharodus alceae</i> ESPEr	C	C	C	C	C
<i>Carcharodus boeticus stauderi</i> REVERDIN		F			
<i>Spialia doris daphne</i> EVANS		1			
<i>Spialia sertorius ali</i> OBERTHÜR	C	C	C	C	C
<i>Thymelicus hamza</i> OBERTHÜR	C	C	C	C	C

7 (3) : 257-263, 1984), Moroccan *P. martini* fly in May and June. We caught both sexes, and some males were already worn, so in this area the species must have started to emerge during the first half of April.

A longer visit would probably have produced even more species. In particular, a visit to Jbel Lekst (2350 m) near Tafraoute would probably be rewarding.